1:Radin E-5 (1908-1913) 1923
NP12 Winnebago NP12

CHAPTER VII

SYSTEM OF EDUCATION[1]

871 The Winnebago seem to have had a more or less formal system of instruction. This consisted of a series of precepts on different aspects of life, such as the duty of fasting, of being a warrior, of behavior to one's parents and relatives, how to treat one's wife and women in general, how to bring up children, how to behave to strangers, etc. These formal teachings were called *hak'i'ke*[2], which means "precepts" or "teachings." Doubtless those obtained do not constitute all the different types existing, but they seem fairly representative.

My Father's Teaching to His Sons and Daughters

System of Instruction to Son

867 776 787 My son, when you grow up you should see to it that you are of some benefit to your fellowmen. There is only one way in which you can begin to be of any aid to them, and that is to fast. So, my son, see to it that you fast. Our grandfather, the fire, who stands at all times in the center of our dwelling, sends forth all kinds of blessings.[3] Be sure that you make an attempt to obtain his blessings.

My son, do you remember to have our grandfathers, the war chiefs, bless you. See to it that they pity you.[4] Some day when you go on the warpath their blessings will enable you to have specific foreknowledge of all that will happen to you on that occasion. This will likewise enable you to accomplish what you desire without the danger of anything interfering with your plans. Without the slightest trouble you will then be able to obtain the prizes of war. Without any trouble

[1] This chapter was originally intended for special publication and the notes prepared for it have been retained.

372 [2] The fire (*ge'ra*) is regarded as a spirit by the Winnebago. As a spirit he possesses many gifts that are of use to human beings in their sojourn on earth, and in order to obtain them, mortals must make offerings of tobacco to him. He may also appear to them during their fastings and bless them with a number of powers. In addition to his other powers, it is believed that he is the messenger of Earthmaker and the other spirits and that he transmits both the messages, as well as the offerings that mortals make to them, by means of the smoke that rises upward. The old man speaks of the fire first, because being always around them it is a comparatively easy task to make offerings to it.

[3] This is the regular expression used for blessing. The idea seems to be that through fasting and crying you are to put yourself in a "pitiable" condition and that then the spirits, seeing your state, will pity you and grant you what you have asked. The word "grandfathers" is used in the sense of ancestral spirits, the thunderbirds, who are regarded as the dispensers of war power, not only by members of this clan but by all Winnebago.

7: Radin E-5 (ca. 1912) 1928 NP12 Winnebago NP12

§12. *My Grandfather Adopts Me*

Once my father gave me away. Once on my return home I found my father talking to my grandfather and after a while I saw the old man weep. He had just lost a son, a young man and the last of his children. They had all died. It was this that they were talking about. I heard my grandfather say finally that he was tired of life. Then my father, weeping, called him by his relationship term and said: "I sympathize with you for you indeed speak the truth, yet in spite of it all I wish you to live. Here is my son, my own, and of all my children the one I love best. He is obedient. He is present here listening to me. He shall be your companion and as long as you live he will take you by the hand." Thus did he speak and the old man thanked him profusely.

After that I stayed with my grandfather. He thought a great deal of me and I got along very well in every way. He was a great man, one who doctored and who had great knowledge of medicine. This he used to give to the sick. He was also a great Medicine Dance man and an old soldier.

About this time a school was built at Tomah, Wisconsin, and I wanted very badly to go to it. My grandfather consented and I went there for a winter. In the